

## LANDING OF RAFFLES AT SINGAPORE.

In No. 10 of the Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, page 285, is an interesting account of the "Landing of RAFFLES at Singapore, by an Eye-Witness."\* So long as WA HAKIM, the name given to this venerable deponent, keeps to what he saw, his narrative appears to be strictly correct; but other details are so evidently contrary to what would have taken place, that I venture to question their accuracy. For instance, he says:—"Batin SAPI, an Orang laut, went to bring Tunku LONG from Bulang. I think he was away four days. Batin SAPI came back first, and then Tunku LONG came."

Now, it is very unlikely that Sir STAMFORD RAFFLES, who had some knowledge and experience in Malay etiquette, would send a single "Orang laut" to summon to his presence a Prince of the Royal Blood, whom he intended to make Sultan of Johor, in order to obtain a proper cession of Singapore, and considering it a pity to allow such an erroneous statement pass to posterity as history, I have made enquiries from the best authorities, and find that two Anak Raja, namely, Raja OMBONG and Inche WAN ABDULLAH, were the persons entrusted with the mission, and they brought Tunku LONG here, having found him fishing in the Straits of Rhio. These Anak Raja received each \$500 for their trouble. My chief informant has been Mr. C. F. KEUN, who derived his information from Tunku PURBA, wife of Sultan HUSSEIN; from Raja PRANG, brother of Raja OMBONG, and from Tunku DAGANG: and the account seems generally accepted by the Malays as correct. It is

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\*[With reference to this "Note," it may be as well to give the letter with which the previous "Note" was forwarded for Journal No. 10, which is here referred to:—

"All the accounts I have got hold of in H.'s extensive library are contradictory. Thus in 'Sir Stamford Raffles' Life by his Widow' no definite account is given of his landing, but it says that the account as given by CRAWFURD in the "Embassy to Siam" is wrong. In the first number of the predecessor of the Straits Asiatic Society's Journal, dated 1875, another account is given; and then there is the 'Hikâiat Abdullah' which differs from all. So that really I think old WA HAKIM's account is useful. I have put it in a condensed form." ED.]

also, I believe, confirmed by Munshi ABDULLAH in his "Hikayat," but I cannot, at present, refer to the book.

The idea of a Batin being sent on such a mission will make Malays, or those acquainted with their manners and customs, smile; but it is very possible that Batin SAPI accompanied the "noblemen" mentioned above.

W. H. R.

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### LATAH.

I have received several communications from different quarters upon the subject of my recent paper on *Latah*. On one point, my correspondents seem to be agreed, viz., that the omission of Chinese from the list of residents in the Straits who are afflicted with *Latah*, is due to my defective observation.

It would shew great presumption were I to say definitely that those who have favoured me with their criticism are wrong in their opinion; but it would be equally false humility on my part to admit its correctness, upon the data which lie before me.

In no case have any reasons been given for the assumption that I am in error; nor are any particularised instances referred to by which such error might be corrected or modified.

And I may add, with candour, but I trust without offence, that many of my recent correspondents have had neither length of time, nor favourable opportunities, in Malaya, sufficient to warrant the formation of their very definitely expressed opinions.

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I am told by all who have written to me that numbers of Chinese in the Straits are imitative *Latahs*. I am indeed told by one writer that such cases are "numberless."

It could hardly have escaped my notice that there are many Chinese in this country who imitate the words and jestures of others. But this is true of many people in all countries.